

result of addiction. It is impacting our districts all across America. It is our duty while we are here, as Members of Congress, to do everything in our power to address this now, to turn the tide, to fight back, and to save families that are being torn apart. That is why I support all of these great bills that are moving through the process here in the House.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 101st anniversary of the Armenian genocide and honor the lives of 1.5 million Armenians who were killed between 1915 and 1923 by the Ottoman Empire. The Republic of Turkey, sadly, continues to try to silence the voices of the survivors and their descendants around the world, but we will never forget nor will we be intimidated into silence.

Several years ago I told the foreign minister of Turkey, who is now the President, that Turkey must recognize the genocide and put this chapter of history to rest. It is extremely frustrating that Turkey continues to ignore what really happened, but in addition to that, it is very disappointing and unacceptable that President Obama failed once again to call the murder of 1.5 million Armenians a genocide—because that is what it was.

Recognizing the Armenian genocide is not something to be debated. The Europe Parliament has gone on record of recognizing the genocide, and last year Pope Francis spoke of the tragedy that took place, the Armenian genocide. Scholars and historians acknowledge that the systematic killings and deportations that took place constituted a genocide.

I, however, simply do not have to rely on the word of historians. Growing up in the San Joaquin Valley in the Fresno area, I heard stories from my friends and neighbors, the Kezerians, the Abrahamians, and the Koligians, whose families experienced the horrors at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

As we reflect on this day, it is equally fitting to honor the hundreds of thousands of Armenian men and women who bravely began new lives in the United States after witnessing unspeakable tragedies to their families and in their villages. Survivors and their descendants, many of whom settled in California, have become bright examples of what it means to live the American Dream in their own diaspora.

I would like to use this opportunity to tell you of an experience last Friday in Fresno. I had the distinct honor of participating in a wreath-laying event with leaders of the Armenian community and the Armenian National Committee of America, its national chairman, Raffi Hamparian.

I want to take this opportunity to honor someone who brought a sense of

justice to those who perished during that time. We want to recognize a true Armenian hero, Soghomon Tehlirian. As a part of Operation Nemesis, planned by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Soghomon Tehlirian assassinated Talaat Pasha, who was the last prime minister of the Ottoman Empire and the orchestrator of the Armenian genocide.

This was an act of justice served on behalf of the Armenian people. Tehlirian was acquitted of the charges by a jury in Germany in the 1920s and later moved to Serbia, and then to San Francisco, California. He died in 1960 and is buried at the Ararat Massis Armenian Cemetery in Fresno, California, which then was the only Armenian cemetery in the country.

I hope my colleagues will join me and the Armenians throughout the Nation and throughout the world in honoring Mr. Tehlirian and to also pay tribute to the 1.5 million lives lost in the genocide—the first genocide in the 20th century—as well as their descendants who live today, for we must never ever forget the history. As Santayana once said: Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it.

DENIM DAY

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, on a separate matter, I rise today to recognize Denim Day, which is observed in April throughout the world as being Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

My staff today is wearing denim, joining other organizations throughout the district and throughout the Nation to raise the awareness about sexual violence prevention.

I would like to commend the Valley Crisis Center in Merced, the Madera Community Action Partnership, and the Marjaree Mason Center in Fresno, and the San Joaquin Valley organizations for all that they do to support and serve the victims of sexual assault.

Today, on Denim Day, and every day we stand with the victims and survivors, their families, and their friends to make everyone aware and to prevent the spread of sexual violence.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, this year, job creators should expect significant changes to Federal wage and hour laws, throwing yet one more hurdle in front of them and their employees as the U.S. Department of Labor, the DOL, finalizes new overtime regulations under the Fair Labor Standards Act, or the FLSA.

The basic premise of the FLSA, which applies to many Pennsylvania employers, is that if you are receiving a salary, it must be because your employer is cheating you. The rule that has the force of law discourages salaried employees and discourages the give-and-take between employee and

employer to work for the best interest of each one.

There are limited exceptions to the FLSA's overtime obligations for narrow categories of employees and for those in particular industries and occupations. The most common exemptions are for white-collar employees like executive, administrative, and professional employees.

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Currently, an employee must satisfy three criteria to qualify as exempt from Federal overtime pay: first, you must make a salary; second, your salary must be more than \$455 per week, or \$23,660 annually; and third, your primary duties must be consistent with managerial, professional, or administrative positions as defined by the Department of Labor. They don't know every single job in every community across the country, but yet they are the ones that decide, not the people actually doing the work or the ones who started and own the business.

Last year, the DOL proposed arbitrarily increasing the salary threshold to \$50,440 per year, a 113 percent increase, just arbitrarily said that is the way it is going to be. It also proposed automatically increasing the salary threshold on an annual basis regardless of what the economy is. If the economy grew at 4 percent, I guess it would be one thing. If it didn't grow or it grew at 0.3 percent, which is what GDP is currently, it would still go up—again, just arbitrary. This doesn't come from Congress. This isn't bandied back and forth between the Democrats and the Republicans, between the House and the Senate. This is just bureaucrats making a rule, the force of law.

These proposed rules will bring sweeping changes to Federal wage and hour laws, and they will be especially burdensome on rural areas, like central Pennsylvania. They will also significantly impact local governments, nonprofit organizations, and small retailers, among many others.

Because of this rule, for instance, a dry cleaner that I met with recently simply is going to have to make a choice. They are either going to hire fewer people or raise prices for their customers.

I recently met with county commissioners in the district I am privileged to represent. If the requirement is raised, as DOL proposes, 50 county employees will be affected, which will result in either fewer employees or nearly \$400,000 in expenses for the county moving forward. How do you think they are going to offset those costs if they don't lose those employees or fire those employees? You guessed it. You and I are going to pay—the local taxpayers.

I also met with the YWCA in my district, a nonprofit organization. They looked at the potential impact of these regulations and determined that approximately 30 staff members would be affected, resulting in either a loss of